

Appl. No.: 10/538,535

Reply to Office Action of: 01/14/2008

REMARKS

The examiner is requested to supply a PTO-892 which lists Bowen et al. as a reference.

Claims 1-3 and 9-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bowen et al. (US 5,085,596). Claims 4-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bowen et al. (US 5,085,596) in view of Kituka (US 4,592,612). The examiner is requested to reconsider these rejections.

In regard to Bowen et al., the examiner's rejection is somewhat confusing. "182" is a ferrule assembly. Reference number "182A" is merely an inner ferrule of the assembly 182. There is no indication in Bowen et al. that inner ferrule 182A can function as a "shielding". Also, what element in Bowen et al. does the examiner consider to be applications' claimed "holder"? Figs. 3 and 4 merely show the covers 22, 24 holding the ferrule 182. The covers 22, 24 cannot be considered both a cover as well as a holder (two elements) for purposes of "anticipation" of claim 1. Claim 1 is claiming a connector which has two element; a cover and a holder. Bowen et al. does not disclose these two elements. If 22 is considered a holder and 24 the cover, then the bus bar 180 does not provide a spring biasing force to develop direct contact pressure of the ferrule assembly 182 against the cover 24. Likewise, if 24 is considered a holder and 22 the cover, then the bus bar 180 does not provide a spring biasing force to develop direct contact pressure of the ferrule assembly 182 against the cover

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22. The two covers 22, 24 merely capture the ferrule assembly 182 and flat portion of bus bar 180 between the covers 22, 24.

Claim 1 has been amended above to clarify applicants' claimed invention. Claim 1 now claims that the flexible pressure means is adapted to provide a spring biasing force to develop direct contact pressure of the connecting means against the cover. As seen in Fig. 4 of Bowen et al., bus bar 180 has a portion located between the cover 24 and the ferrule assembly 182 and fingers 250-258 which contact the cover 24. However, there is no disclosure or suggestion of the bus bar 180 being adapted to provide a spring biasing force to develop direct contact pressure of the ferrule assembly 182 against the cover 24. Claim 1, on the other hand, claims that the flexible pressure means is adapted to provide a spring biasing force to develop direct contact pressure of the connecting means against the cover. The features of claim 1 are not disclosed or suggested in the cited art. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable and should be allowed.

Though the claims dependent upon claim 1 contain their own allowable subject matter, these claims should at least be allowable due to their dependence from allowable claim 1. However, to expedite prosecution at this time, no further comment will be made.

In regard to independent claim 17, it has not been amended. Claim 17 claims that the flexible pressure member is adapted to provide a spring biasing force to bias the connecting member and the cover against each other.

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There is no disclosure or suggestion of the bus bar 180 in Bowen et al. being adapted to provide a spring biasing force to bias the ferrule assembly 182 and the cover 22,24 against each other. Bowen et al. merely describes at column 7, line 60 et seq. that the bus bar 180 is retained by the bosses 170-178 on the cover 24 to force the bus bar against the ferrule assemblies 182-192. In addition, Bowen et al. does not disclose both a "holder" and a "cover" (two elements; not merely one element) as recited in claim 17. Thus, Bowen et al. cannot "anticipate" claim 17.

Similar to that noted above, if 22 is considered a holder and 24 the cover, then the bus bar 180 does not provide a spring biasing force to bias the ferrule assembly 182 against the cover 24. Likewise, if 24 is considered a holder and 22 the cover, then the bus bar 180 does not provide a spring biasing force to bias the ferrule assembly 182 against the cover 22. The two covers 22, 24 merely capture the ferrule assembly 182 and flat portion of bus bar 180 between the covers 22, 24.

The features of claim 17 are not disclosed or suggested in the cited art. Therefore, claim 17 is patentable and should be allowed.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issue remain, the examiner is invited to call applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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